



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

News Release

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Businessman convicted of harboring illegal aliens working for his company *Man also pleaded guilty to bribing a federal officer*

Boston, MA -- An Allston businessman, has been convicted in federal court of knowingly harboring illegal aliens who were working in his cleaning business. Jose Neto, 39, of Allston, MA was also an illegal alien from Brazil.

The conviction was jointly announced by United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan, Matthew J. Etre, Acting Special Agent in Charge of U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement Office of Investigations in Boston, and Steven Mocsary, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement Office of Professional Responsibility for the Eastern Region. The conviction on Wednesday followed a jury trial before U.S. District Senior Judge Morris E. Lasker.

Evidence presented during the three day trial proved that, between 2003 and 2005, the defendant knowingly harbored illegal aliens from Brazil in an apartment he leased in Agawam and in a house he owned in Allston. He also employed some of the individuals he harbored and offered to sell others identification documents.

The defendant had previously pled guilty to charges of bribing an immigration official, inducing illegal aliens to remain in the country and having a pattern or practice of knowingly employing illegal aliens.

The investigation revealed that the defendant paid bribes to an undercover ICE agent several times over a six month period. The Office of Professional Responsibility supported the investigation during the meetings between the defendant and the undercover agent. "The defendant believed he was paying a corrupt government official in order to purchase green cards for himself and for sale to other illegal aliens," said Mocsary.

Etre stated, "This case is a perfect example of how an unscrupulous employer exploited illegal aliens in order to increase his profits. The aliens the defendant employed worked seven days a week without overtime." Etre pointed out that the investigation showed that the defendant had no respect for U.S. immigration law and would stop at nothing in order to remain in this country illegally.

United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan said, "Immigration laws exist to protect American citizens, as well as the rights of legal immigrants. The United States Attorney's Office is committed to ensuring that these

laws are upheld, and that the integrity of the immigration system is respected. Mr. Neto took advantage of the system, and is a prime example of why partnering with our investigative agencies, to protect our nation's immigration process and our nation's borders, is so critical.”

Although no date has yet been scheduled for sentencing, NETO faces up to 15 years imprisonment, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine. The jury also determined that the defendant's four-family house in Allston should be forfeited because it was used in connection with his harboring offense.

The case was investigated by U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Paul Levenson and Sabita Singh of U.S. Attorney Michael J. Sullivan's Public Corruption Unit.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.